

**The Forum on Religion and Ecology Newsletter**  
**7.12 (December 2013)**

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**1. Editorial, by Elizabeth McAnally**

Greetings,

Welcome to the December issue of the newsletter for the Forum on Religion and Ecology. I have much to share with you this month with regards to developments in the field of Religion and Ecology, including publications, conferences, events, and more.

We are very pleased to announce that the EMMY® award-winning *Journey of the Universe* film is now available on Netflix! If you have enjoyed *Journey of the Universe*, we would really appreciate if you might be willing to rate or review it at:

[http://movies.netflix.com/WiMovie/70276028?strkid=1150144986\\_0\\_0&trkid=222336&movieid=70276028](http://movies.netflix.com/WiMovie/70276028?strkid=1150144986_0_0&trkid=222336&movieid=70276028) The film is also now available for streaming and downloading from both iTunes

and Reelhouse. It is, of course, also available in DVD format at Amazon.com, Target.com, BN.com, and a number of other online stores listed at: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/buy/>. The film has been translated into Spanish and the book into French, Italian, and Korean. For a new Overview Statement of the *Journey* project, visit: [http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage/JOTU\\_Overview\\_8-28-13.pdf](http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage/JOTU_Overview_8-28-13.pdf)

We are also delighted to let you know about a new video series, “Conversations on World Religions and Ecology,” with Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim, Chris Ives, Heather Eaton, James Miller, David Haberman, Safei-Eldin Hamed, Christopher Chapple, Lawrence Troster, and Paul Waldau. The ten videos in this series are each 10-15 minutes long and provide helpful introductions to the responses of religious traditions to ecological issues. We extend deep gratitude to Rachel Myslivy at the University of Kansas for producing these videos, which can be watched at: <http://fore.research.yale.edu/multimedia/conversations-on-religion-and-ecology/>

I hope this newsletter supports your own work and helps you further your own engagements with the field of Religion and Ecology.

Warm wishes,  
Elizabeth McAnally  
California Institute of Integral Studies  
Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale  
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<http://www.yale.edu/religionandecology>  
[news@religionandecology.org](mailto:news@religionandecology.org)

## **2. Video Series: “Conversations on World Religions and Ecology”**

- \* Buddhism and Ecology, with Chris Ives and Mary Evelyn Tucker
- \* Christianity and Ecology, with Heather Eaton and Mary Evelyn Tucker
- \* Confucianism and Ecology, with Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim
- \* Daoism and Ecology, with James Miller and Mary Evelyn Tucker
- \* Hinduism and Ecology, with David Haberman and Mary Evelyn Tucker
- \* Indigenous Traditions and Ecology, with John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker
- \* Islam and Ecology, with Safei-Eldin Hamed and Mary Evelyn Tucker
- \* Jainism and Ecology, with Christopher Chapple and Mary Evelyn Tucker
- \* Judaism and Ecology, with Lawrence Troster and Mary Evelyn Tucker

\* Religion, Ethics, and Animals, with Paul Waldau and Mary Evelyn Tucker

To watch these videos, visit:

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/multimedia/conversations-on-religion-and-ecology/>

### **3. Video: “The Emerging Alliance of Religion and Ecology” (Lecture by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim)**

“The Emerging Alliance of Religion and Ecology”

Lecture by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim

Boston College

October 17, 2013

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/the-emerging-alliance-of-religion-and-ecology-lecture-by-mary-evelyn-tucker/>

To watch the video recording of this lecture, visit:

<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/stm/edevnts/CampusEvents/PastLectures/20121/10-17-2013.html>

For more video recordings of lectures on the intersection of religion and ecology, visit:

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/multimedia>

### **4. Videos: “Facing Gaia, Six Lectures on the Political Theology of Nature” (Gifford Lectures by Bruno Latour)**

In February 2013, Bruno Latour gave six Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion in Edinburgh under the title “Facing Gaia, Six Lectures on the Political Theology of Nature.”

\* Lecture 1: ‘Once Out of Nature’ – natural religion as a pleonasm

\* Lecture 2: A shift in agency – with apologies to David Hume

\* Lecture 3: The puzzling face of a secular Gaia

\* Lecture 4: The Anthropocene and the destruction of the image of the Globe

\* Lecture 5: War of the Worlds: Humans against Earthbound

\* Lecture 6: Inside the ‘planetary boundaries’: Gaia’s Estate

Those six lectures in ‘natural religion’ explore what it could mean to live at the epoch of the Anthropocene when what was until now a mere décor for human history is becoming the principal actor. They confront head on the controversial figure of Gaia, that is, the Earth understood not as system but as what has a history, what mobilizes everything in the same

geostory. Gaia is not Nature, nor is it a deity. In order to face a secular Gaia, we need to extract ourselves from the amalgam of Religion and Nature. It is a new form of political power that has to be explored through a renewed attempt at political theology composed of those three concepts: demos, theos and nomos. It is only once the multiplicity of people in conflicts for the new geopolitics of the Anthropocene is recognized, that the ‘planetary boundaries’ might be recognized as political delineations and the question of peace addressed. Neither Nature nor Gods bring unity and peace. ‘The people of Gaia’, the Earthbound might be the ‘artisans of peace’.

Watch these lectures on YouTube:

[http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=gifford+lectures+bruno+latour&sm=3](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=gifford+lectures+bruno+latour&sm=3)

The transcription of the lectures is available at:

[http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/downloads/GIFFORD-SIX-LECTURES\\_1.pdf](http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/downloads/GIFFORD-SIX-LECTURES_1.pdf)

For more information, visit Bruno Latour’s website:

<http://www.bruno-latour.fr/node/486>

## **5. *Journey of the Universe* Film Screenings**

Film Screenings and Conversation: Salina, KS (December 27-30, 2013)

Art Center Cinema  
150 S. Santa Fe  
Salina, KS

Four Film Screenings at the Art Center Cinema:

Friday, December 27, 4pm  
Saturday, December 28, 11am  
Sunday, December, 29, 11am  
Monday, December, 30, 4pm

“The Journey of Journey of the Universe: A Conversation with the Executive Producers,” Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. Monday, December 30, 7-8pm, at the Art Center Education Wing (242 S. Santa Fe). There will be a community potluck in the Art Center Education Wing beforehand at 5-6:30pm. All are welcome.

All events are open and free to the public.

Sponsored by The Salina Art Center, The Land Institute, and the Resilience Group.

Flyer: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage/JourneyFlyer.pdf>

Poster: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage/JourneyPoster.pdf>

Press Release: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage/JourneyOfTheUniversePR12-3-13.pdf>

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Film Screening: Madison, CT (January 14, 2014)

Scranton Library  
801 Boston Post Rd.  
Madison, CT

7pm

Discussion following the screening  
Sponsored by the Scranton Library  
Hosted by Friends of Hammonasset  
Contact: Don Rankin, M.D., [donandnancyrankin@gmail.com](mailto:donandnancyrankin@gmail.com), 203-245-9192

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Film Screening: Worcester, MA (January 16, 2014)

The Sarah Wyman Whitman Gallery  
6 Institute Rd.  
Worcester, MA

6:30-9pm

Discussion will be lead by Jim Antal, Minister and President of the MA Conference, UCC.  
This film screening is part of the WAMS Winter Film Series.  
For flyer and registration form, visit: [http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage/JOTU\\_1-16-14.pdf](http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage/JOTU_1-16-14.pdf)  
Contact: Mary Robbins, [mary@wamsworks.org](mailto:mary@wamsworks.org)

## **6. Energy Vision Statement**

The Energy Vision Statement was prepared by three communities of Catholic Sisters in Central Kentucky, all of whom have been leaders in opposing a pipeline that would transport hazardous natural gas liquids (resulting from the fracking activity in NY and PA) through KY. The same pipeline, if built, will also run through Clermont Co, OH, close to Grailville, OH.

It is a public statement that was developed in response to the development of natural gas pipelines, which will connect hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") operations in the northeast with chemical processing plants in the south. It speaks out against all plans for expanded extraction of fossil fuel or infrastructures such as pipelines that require the plundering of God's creation and the endangerment of human communities. The statement advocates instead for immediate regional and national plans for the transition to renewable sources of energy. If your faith

community would like to sign on, please help that to happen ASAP. Individual signatures also welcome ASAP. The press release, with initial signers, was published Dec 6th, but signatures will continue to be received.

To read and sign the Energy Vision Statement, visit:

<http://www.lorettocommunity.org/energy/>

## 7. New Publications

*The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity*

By Willis Jenkins

Georgetown University Press, 2013

<http://press.georgetown.edu/book/georgetown/future-ethics#sthash.YyViKytH.dpuf>

*The Future of Ethics* interprets the big questions of sustainability and social justice through the practical problems arising from humanity's increasing power over basic systems of life. What does climate change mean for our obligations to future generations? How can the sciences work with pluralist cultures in ways that will help societies learn from ecological change? Traditional religious ethics examines texts and traditions and highlights principles and virtuous behaviors that can apply to particular issues. Willis Jenkins develops lines of practical inquiry through "prophetic pragmatism," an approach to ethics that begins with concrete problems and adapts to changing circumstances. This brand of pragmatism takes its cues from liberationist theology, with its emphasis on how individuals and communities actually cope with overwhelming problems. Can religious communities make a difference when dealing with these issues? By integrating environmental sciences and theological ethics into problem-based engagements with philosophy, economics, and other disciplines, Jenkins illustrates the wide understanding and moral creativity needed to live well in the new conditions of human power. He shows the significance of religious thought to the development of interdisciplinary responses to sustainability issues and how this calls for a new style of religious ethics.

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*Living Lightly, Living Faithfully: Religious Faiths and the Future of Sustainability*

Edited by Colin Bell, Jonathan Chaplin, and Robert White

Faraday Institute for Science and Religion and the Kirby Laing Institute for Christian Ethics, 2013

<http://www.faraday.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk/Shop.php?Mode=Books>

The prospects for a sustainable future seem increasingly elusive. Practical progress has lagged well behind scientific findings; governments and other bodies seem to be waiting for a clear lead from public opinion, but most people seem either paralysed or indifferent. However it is being increasingly acknowledged that the world religions have vitally important insights to offer on the question of sustainability both from their teaching and their potential to mobilise large numbers of citizens behind the far-reaching changes we badly need. *Living Lightly, Living Faithfully* explores the distinctive contributions that religions can make to confronting the challenges of

sustainability. Originating from the 2011 "Sustainability in Crisis" conference at Cambridge University, it contains essays from a wide variety of authors representing diverse faith and secular positions, helping us chart a path towards a more sustainable future, and inspiring us to set out on it with renewed passion and hope.

Electronic versions of this book are free to download at:

<http://www.faraday.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk/Shop.php?Mode=Books>

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*Colonialism, Han, and the Transformative Spirit*

By Grace Ji-Sun Kim

Palgrave & Macmillan, 2013

<http://us.macmillan.com/colonialismhanandthetransformativespirit/GraceJiSunKim>

Colonialism, globalization and consumerism have devastated large parts of our world. For the past five centuries, the West has nurtured self-worth through the accumulation of worldly goods, serving our own selfish interests and exploiting others. This has been disastrous not only to human beings but to the whole ecology of the planet. Consumerism drives trade, but consumer buying is now like an unchained beast with tooth and claw causing han (unjust suffering) for exploited peoples as well as for other species and even for planet Earth. This book will examine ways of rethinking and reimagining ourselves, helping us to work in more just directions for a safer, sustainable planet. Empowering ourselves to act more justly includes reimagining and renewing our inspiration from God who is the transformative Spirit who gives, sustains and empowers life to all.

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*Water Ethics: A Values Approach to Solving the Water Crisis*

By David Groenfeldt

Routledge, 2013

<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415626453/>

This book introduces the idea that ethics are an intrinsic dimension of any water policy, program, or practice, and that understanding what ethics are being acted out in water policies is fundamental to an understanding of water resource management. Thus in controversies or conflicts over water resource allocation and use, an examination of ethics can help clarify the positions of conflicting parties as preparation for constructive negotiations. The author shows the benefits of exposing tacit values and motivations and subjecting these to explicit public scrutiny where the values themselves can be debated. The book shows how new technologies, such as drip irrigation, or governance structures, such as river basin organizations are neither "good" nor "bad" in their own right, but can serve a range of interests which are guided by ethics. A new ethic of coexistence and synergies with nature is possible, but ultimately depends not on science, law, or finances but on the values we choose to adopt. The book includes a wide range of case studies from countries including Australia, India, Philippines, South Africa and USA. These

cover various contexts including water for agriculture, urban, domestic and industrial use, the rights of indigenous people and river, watershed and ecosystem management.

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*Exploring Earthiness: The Reality and Perception of Being Human Today*

By Anne Primavesi

Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2013

[https://wipfandstock.com/store/Exploring\\_Earthiness\\_The\\_Reality\\_and\\_Perception\\_of\\_Being\\_Human\\_Today/](https://wipfandstock.com/store/Exploring_Earthiness_The_Reality_and_Perception_of_Being_Human_Today/)

If we see ourselves as Earth rather than Earth as existing for us our perspective is transformed. A variety of religious, philosophical, cultural, and political self-perceptions that dominate our sense of human identity are deeply challenged by this shift in perspective. John Locke's doctrine of Earth as human "property" has been central to current presuppositions about our selves: justified on the grounds of our possessing unique, divinely bestowed, rational abilities. But today, the effects of that doctrine on Earth's resource base and on its other-than-human creatures directly challenge such assumptions. At the same time contemporary scientific findings about the evolution of earthly life demonstrate that while we belong to Earth and nowhere else, Earth does not belong to us. Exploring this role reversal raises fundamental questions about current theological, philosophical, scientific, and economic presuppositions that underpin the "business as usual" viewpoint and human-centered aims of contemporary policies and lifestyles. It takes us beyond hierarchical Christian and philosophical doctrines toward a deeper, Earth-focused and peace-based understanding of what it means to be human today.

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*Ecovillages: Lessons for Sustainable Community*

By Karen Litfin

Polity Books, 2013

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0745679501.html>

(For 20% discount, use code PY461.)

Companion website: <http://ecovillagebook.org/>

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtNjZaXDGqM>

Growing disenchanted with top-down responses to the mounting global ecological crisis, Karen Litfin took a break from her work on international politics in order to visit ecovillages around the world. From rural to urban, high tech to low tech, spiritual to secular, she discovered an under-the-radar global making positive and radical changes from the ground up. In this inspiring book, Litfin views these collective experiments through four windows: ecology, economics, community, and consciousness—or E2C2 for short. How is it that ecovillagers can live well on just a tiny fraction of the typical per capita consumption of their home countries? Material factors like self-built homes and home-grown food tell only part of the story, for it is the intersubjective dimension of ecovillage life that facilitates most of their material successes. Ecovillages, she concludes, are living laboratories for the transformation of human



consciousness, and their successes can be applied to existing social structures, from the local to the global.

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*From the Big Bang to God: Our Awe-Inspiring Journey of Evolution*

By Lloyd Geering

Polebridge Press, 2013

<http://www.westarinstitute.org/store/from-the-big-bang-to-god/>

Until two hundred years ago, most people in the Western world believed that earth and sky were no more than six thousand years old. Then science brought that date into question. In the pages of *From the Big Bang to God*, Lloyd Geering simply and concisely tells the story of evolution and traces the rise and fall of God as a human response to discoveries about the universe.

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“Practise What You Preach: A Faith-based Approach to Conservation in Indonesia”

By Jeanne E. McKay, Fachruddin M. Mangunjaya, Yoan Dinata, Stuart R. Harrop, and Fazlun Khalid

*Oryx* FirstView (2013): 1-7.

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=9067642&fulltextType=RA&fileId=S0030605313001087>

Abstract: Indonesia contains 10% of the world's tropical rainforests and is the most populous Muslim country. A faith-based approach to conservation could therefore yield significant conservation benefits here. Here, we report on a Darwin Initiative project component that sought to assess the applicability of Islamic teachings to conservation action in West Sumatra. We developed water-conservation-themed sermons that were delivered by project-trained religious leaders in 10 mosques and nine Islamic boarding schools during the holy month of Ramadan. We conducted entry–exit questionnaire surveys to assess levels of concern, awareness and intent to act. The results revealed that greater attention should be paid to raising awareness of the linkages between Islam and conservation rather than on conservation principles alone, which were already adequately understood. This study provides the first insights into the important role that women could play within a faith-based project. Female respondents demonstrated greater knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings about the environment and the services provided by watershed forests. They were also more likely to contribute to conservation activities, suggesting that future projects should seek to involve this often marginalized stakeholder group fully, as well as provide practical ways for men and women to transform words into action.

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“Religious leaders urged to aid Earth”

By Christy Brown

Courier-journal.com

November 24, 2013

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/news/item/religious-leaders-urged-to-aid-earth/>

Last week, Christy Brown of Louisville delivered the keynote address at the Religions for Peace Ninth World Assembly in Vienna, Austria. More than 600 international religious leaders and other concerned governmental and non-governmental representatives met to “advance multi-religious action for the common good. Brown spoke about the sacredness of air, water and soil, and the responsibility of people of faith to revere life.

Read excerpts from this address:

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/news/item/religious-leaders-urged-to-aid-earth/>

## **8. Events**

“Environmental Justice: A Human Rights Issue—An Interfaith Perspective” (TeleSeminar)

December 10, 2013

7-8pm, by phone

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/EJFlyer.pdf>

“Post Crash City: Environments and Ecologies”

The University of York, Heslington, York, UK

December 12-13, 2013

<http://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/research/groups/curb/events/#tab-1>

“Tantric Ecology: Planetary Regeneration with Indian and High Amazonian Practices”

A Workshop with Frederique Apffel-Marglin and Neela Bhattacharya Saxena

Sachamama Center, Lamas, Peru

January 4-11, 2014

[http://www.casasangapilla.com/sachamamain/?page\\_id=10](http://www.casasangapilla.com/sachamamain/?page_id=10)

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/Tantric-Ecology-workshop-flyer.pdf>

“Ecology and Liturgy: The Jewish Feast of Tu BiShvat”

Presentation by Dr. Devorah Schoenfeld, Department of Theology

Loyola University, Chicago, IL, USA

January 15, 2014

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/ecology-and-liturgy-the-jewish-feast-of-tu-bishvat/>

Ecofilm Festival and Competition (TEFF 2014)

Birla Institute of Technology and Science-Pilani, K.K. Birla Goa Campus, India

January 31 – February 1, 2014

[www.teff.in](http://www.teff.in)

For more events, visit:

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/>

## **9. Call for Papers**

“Welcome to the Anthropocene: From Global Challenge to Planetary Stewardship”

Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences (AESS) 2014 Annual Meeting

Pace University  
New York, NY, USA

June 11-14, 2014

Proposal deadline: February 4, 2014

[http://www.aess.info/content.aspx?page\\_id=22&club\\_id=939971&module\\_id=148423&actr=4&sl=228853867](http://www.aess.info/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=939971&module_id=148423&actr=4&sl=228853867)

## **10. World Wildlife Fund (WWF) -- Sacred Earth: Faiths for Conservation**

Many of the most important conservation places in the world are sacred. Sites like the Amazon, South Dakota’s Black Hills, and the Mekong River are deeply rooted in local spiritual and cultural traditions. These places also face overwhelming threats, including deforestation, pollution, unsustainable extraction, melting glaciers and rising sea levels. Such threats not only endanger the integrity of ecosystems but also leave the people who live there impoverished and vulnerable.

Over 80 percent of people in the world follow a specific faith; there are at least 2 billion Christians, 1.34 billion Muslims, 950 million Hindus, and 200 million Buddhists worldwide. WWF's Sacred Earth program works with religious leaders and faith communities who best articulate ethical and spiritual ideals around the sacred value of Earth and its diversity, and are committed to protecting it.

Our partnerships with faith leaders and communities focus on activities such as forestation and watershed restoration, river protection and clean up, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and combating illegal wildlife trade.

<http://worldwildlife.org/initiatives/sacred-earth-faiths-for-conservation>

## **11. 2014 Calendar: “Belonging to Earth and Sky”**

“Belonging to Earth and Sky” Calendar combines contemporary science with inspired passion. It is the heartwork of Peter Adair, with graphic design by Julia Jandrisits. The calendar was

conceived, written, designed and printed in Vermont. Twelve stunning images illustrate Adair's evocative prose, as the story unfolds one month at a time. 12" x 12" glossy format opening to 12" x 24".

The amazing story that our science has revealed through its careful measuring of matter is astonishing in its scope and implications for our time, for all times. We are in the midst of an intense global transformation that can be characterized as a coming-of-age crisis of humans, the now-dominant large species on the planet. Once again Peter Adair's work of the heart uplifts us and brings us into the center of the vastness, the oneness, the intimacy of the ever-evolving miracle of which we are an inseparable part.

The cost of the 2014 calendar is \$14.95 each, or 2 calendars for \$25, or the bulk price of 10 calendars or more for only \$10 per calendar, plus shipping on all orders. You can now preview and order the calendar at [www.earthstorycalendar.com](http://www.earthstorycalendar.com).

## **12. *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology***

*Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology* has as its focus the relationships between religion, culture and ecology world-wide. Articles discuss major world religious traditions, such as Islam, Buddhism or Christianity; the traditions of indigenous peoples; new religious movements; and philosophical belief systems, such as pantheism, nature spiritualities, and other religious and cultural worldviews in relation to the cultural and ecological systems. Focusing on a range of disciplinary areas including Anthropology, Environmental Studies, Geography, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Sociology and Theology, the journal also presents special issues that center around one theme.

For more information, visit: [brill.com/wo](http://brill.com/wo)

For the online edition, visit: <http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/journals/15685357>

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<http://fore.research.yale.edu/publications/newsletters/>